MEMOIRS OF THE
ARCHÆOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

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RAMAPRASAD CHANDA

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PUBLISHED BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

JANPATH, NEW DELHI

1998

Original edition 1926
Reprint 1998

©
1998
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Price : Rs. 60.00

PRINTED AT BENGAL OFFSET WORKS, 335, KHAJOOR ROAD, NEW DELHI - 110005

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THE INDUS VALLEY IN THE VEDIC PERIOD.

1. RIGVEDIC PERIOD.

The archæological discoveries at Harappa in the Punjab and at Mohen-jo-Daro in Sind have pushed back the monumental history of India from the third century B.C. to at least the beginning of the third millennium B.C. by one single stroke. A series of literary monuments, the Vedic Saṁhitās, the Brāhmaṇas, and the Sūtras, have long been known, the youngest in age among which is probably older than the third century B.C. But a wide divergence of opinion relating to the age of these works and particularly of the Rigveda among scholars renders their use as sources of history unsafe. On the ground that in the Rigvedic period the year began with the summer solstice when the sun was in conjunction with the lunar mansion Phālgunī, Tilak and Jacobi assigned that work to 4,000 B.C.; while others, having regard to the extraordinary similarities of the Avestan and Vedic languages and the probability that the Avesta is not very ancient, place it nearly three thousand years later (about 1,200 B.C.). But it may now be hoped that archæology will one day enable students to fix the chronology of the Vedic literature with greater degree of certainty. To facilitate the co-ordination of the data of Archæology with literary evidences I propose to discuss in this paper some of the passages in the Vedic literature that throw light on the early history of the Indus valley. Muir's *Original Sanskrit Texts* and Macdonell and Keith's *Vedic Index* make such a discussion easier.

A broad division between an earlier and a later phase may be distinguished in the Vedic period, the former represented by the Rigveda Saṁhitā and the latter by the Yajurveda Saṁhitās, the Brāhmaṇas and the Sūtras. Modern scholars also recognise different chronological strata in the hymns of the Rigveda. Books (Maṇḍalas) II to VII, known as the "family books," are the oldest. Next in order of time follow Books I and VIII. Book X is the final addition, a sort of supplement to the older compilation, and book IX is made up of Soma hymns extracted from the "family books".

Rigvedic India comprises the territory watered by the mighty Indus with its western and eastern tributaries and the river Sarasvatī. The Jumna (Yamunā) is mentioned thrice and the Gaṅgā (Ganges) directly only once in the Rigveda. Though the term *samudra* occurs very often in the sense of a terrestrial de-

pository of water it has been asserted that, "In the period of the Rigveda there is no clear sign that they (the Aryan tribes) had yet reached the Ocean. No passage even renders it probable that sea navigation was known........ The word *samudra*, which in later times undoubtedly means 'Ocean,' occurs not rarely; but where the application is terrestrial, there seems no strong reason to believe that it means more than the stream of the Indus in its lower course, after it has received the waters of the Punjab".[1] In the Vedic Index the same authority subscribes to the opposite view. The authors of the Vedic Index write :—

'In other passages he (Zimmer) thinks that *samudra* denotes the river Indus when it received all its Punjab tributaries. It is probable that this is to circumscribe too narrowly the Vedic knowledge of the ocean, which was almost inevitable to people who knew the Indus. There are references to the treasures of the ocean, perhaps pearls or the gains of trade, and the story of Bhujyu seems to allude to marine navigation.'[2]

After the discoveries at Harappa and Mohen-jo-Daro the controversy relating to the significance of the term *samudra* in the Rigveda must be considered as closed. On a dry bed of the Ravi or Irāvatī which under the name Parushni plays a prominent part in the history of the Rigvedic period lie the ruins of Harappa that have yielded seals with pictograms, painted pottery, conch shell objects and other antiquities assigned to about 3,000 B.C. on Sumerian analogy. About 400 miles to the south of Harappa, on a dry bed of the Indus at Mohen-jo-Daro near Dokri in the Larkana District in Sind have been found in larger number seals and other antiquities of exactly the same types. It is undeniable that the people around Harappa were in touch with the people of Mohen-jo-Daro when these seals were engraved and the painted pottery manufactured, and that the users of the conch shell objects knew the sea. Nothing as yet discovered affords any indication that the builders of the pre-historic cities at Harappa and Mohen-jo-Daro were akin to the Rigvedic Aryas.[3] On the other hand the civilisation of those builders appears to be of a non-Vedic type. It is quite possible that the Rishis or priest-poets who composed the hymns of the Rigveda derived their information about the sea from these older inhabitants of the southern Punjab. But such a hypothesis is open to one serious objection. It may be argued that the Rigvedic Aryas reached the lower course of the Parushṇī long after the disappearance of the folk that built the ancient city of Harappa and when that city was already in ruins. We should now inquire how far such an assumption is justified by the hymns; whether the hymns contain any evidence to show that the Rigvedic Aryas came in contact with an older civilisation in the Indus valley.

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[1] Prof. A. B. Keith in *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, p. 79.

[2] Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects*, (London, 1912) p. 432.

[3] Instead of using the very ambiguous term "Aryan", I shall designate the Rigvedic folk who recognised Indra as the chief god as "Arya." In R. V. 1, 130, 8 they are referred to as *yajamānam-āryam*, "Arya worshippers."

The Yadus and the Turvaśas are two of the warrior tribes often mentioned in the hymns of the Rigveda. In one stanza that occurs twice in the Saṁhitā (6, 20, 12=1,174,9) it is said that Indra safely brought Turvaśa and Yadu over the *samudra* (sea). This legend may or may not be based on genuine tradition relating to the migration of the two warrior tribes from beyond the sea, that is to say, the Arabian Sea, but it may be safely stated that this unique stanza, the only one in the entire collection that clearly refers to immigration, shows that in the early Rigvedic period when the hymns of Book VI were composed, among the orthodox worshippers of Indra in the Punjab most of whose ancestors evidently hailed from the North-west, the Yadus and Turvaśas were believed to be descendants of immigrants from the south. There might or might not have been any basis of fact underneath this belief; but its existence indicates that the region south of the Punjab was recognised as a home of civilisation that could send emigrants worthy of being admitted to the Arya community.

Many of the stanzas of the Rigveda contain references to Pura and Pur both of which terms mean *nagara*, 'town,' in classical Sanskrit. In one stanza (7, 15, 4) an extensive (*śatabhuji*) Pur made of copper or iron (*ayas*) is referred to. In another stanza (1,58,8) prayer is offered to Agni to protect the worshipper with Purs of *ayas*. In such passages *ayas* is evidently used in a metaphorical sense to denote strength. Sushṇa, a demon, is said to have a moveable (*charishṇva*) Pura (8,128). In the Rigveda Pura is much oftener connected with the enemies of the Aryas than with the Arya Rishis and warriors. Two of the famous Rigvedic kings, Divodāsa, the chief of the Bharatas, and Purukutsa, the chief of the Pūrus, are found engaged in war with hostile owners of Puras. Divodāsa was the son of Vadhryaśva and grandfather of the more famous Sudās who defeated a confederacy of ten tribes including the Yadus, Turvaśas and Pūrus on the western bank of the Parushṇī (Ravi). It is said (4, 30, 20) that Indra overthrew a hundred Puras made of stone (*aśmanmayī*) for his worshipper Divodāsa. The Puras that Indra overthrew for Divodāsa evidently belonged to Śambara who is called a Dāsa (non-Arya or demon) of the mountain (6, 26, 5). In one stanza (9, 61, 2), among the enemies of Divodāsa are mentioned the Yadu (the Chief of the Yadus) and Turvaśa (the chief of the Turvaśas) with Śambara. The greatest feat that Indra performed on behalf of Purukutsa, the chief of the Pūrus, is thus described in a stanza (6, 20, 10), "May we, O Indra, gain new (wealth) through your favour; the Pūrus worship thee with this hymn and sacrifices. You destroyed the seven autumnal (*śāradī*) Puras with thunder weapon, slew Dāsas and gave wealth to Purukutsa." The epithet *śāradī*, usually translated as 'autumnal,' is explained by Sāyana in different ways. In his commentary on the above stanza he explains the term *śāradī* as 'belonging to a demon named Śarat.' But in other places (1, 131, 4 etc.) he explains it as 'annual Puras of the enemies strengthened for a year with ramparts, ditches, etc.' The authors of the Vedic Index are of opinion that *śāradī* or autumnal Puras 'may refer to the forts in that season being occupied against Arya attacks or against

inundations caused by overflowing rivers'. The same exploit performed by Indra on behalf of the chief of the Pūrus is also referred to in certain other stanzas.[1].

Modern scholars interpret the term Pur or Pura as a temporary place of refuge. The authors of the Vedic Index write:—

'It would probably be a mistake to regard these forts (Pur) as permanently occupied fortified places like the fortresses of the mediæval barony. They were probably mere places of refuge against attack, ramparts of hardened earth with palisades and a ditch. Pischel and Geldner, however, think that there were towns with wooden walls and ditches like the Indian town of Pataliputra known to Megasthenes and the Pali texts. This is possible, but hardly susceptible of proof, and it is not without significance that the word Nagara is of late occurrence.'

The terms Pur and Pura mean *nagara*, 'city,' 'town,' and not fort. The Sanskrit equivalent of 'fort' is *durga* which also occurs in the Rigveda (5, 34, 7; 7, 25, 2). In one stanza (1, 41, 3) not noticed by the authors of the Vedic Index Durga and Pura occur side by side. Sāyana here takes Pura as an epithet of Durga meaning 'neighbouring.' But if we can shake off our bias relating to the absence of towns in the Rigvedic period we can recognise in this stanza references to both fort and town. The recovery of the ruins of cities at Harappa and Mohen-jo-Daro leaves no room for doubt that the Rigvedic Aryas were familiar with towns and cities of aliens. It is futile to seek any more historical elements in the legends of Divodāsa and Purukutsa than perhaps the names of these heroes. But if we eliminate the mythical and fanciful additions there is no reason to doubt the possibility of the nucleus. There existed and the folk memory remembered that there once existed Arya worshippers of Indra who waged wars against civilized aboriginal neighbours living in towns and fighting from within strong-holds. Who, then, were these enemies of the Aryas? Do the hymns of the Rigveda give us any more information about them?

It appears to me that the aboriginal towns-folk with whom the Aryas came into collision in the Indus Valley are called Paṇis in the hymns of all the books of the Rigveda. Yāska (*Nirukta* 6, 27) in his comment on Rigveda 8,66,10 says, 'The Paṇis are merchants,' and in his comment on R. V. 10, 108, 1 (*Nirukta* 11, 25) he calls the Paṇis demons. The distinction between the human and the superhuman Paṇi is also recognised by Sāyana, the author of the commentary on the Rigveda, and the context justifies the distinction. The word Paṇi is evidently derived from paṇa, 'price.' The human Paṇis of the Rigveda are wealthy merchants who do not offer sacrifice and do not give gifts to priests. In R. V. 1, 124, 10 the poet addressing Dawn says, 'Let the Paṇis who do not perform sacrifice and do not give gifts sleep unwakened (for ever). Another poet sings, 'Ye mighty ones (Aśvins) what do you do there; why

[1] Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. II (London, 1871), pp. 378-379.

do you stay there among people who are held in high esteem though not offering sacrifices; ignore them, destroy the life of the Paṇis' (R. V. 1,83, 3). A poet prays to Indra (1,33,3), 'Do not behave like Paṇi' (*mā Paṇihbhūḥ.*), which according to the scholiast means, 'Do not demand the price of kine.' Another poet, expecting a suitable reward for his offering of Soma drink, addresses the same deity as Paṇi (8,45,14). The Soma-drinker Indra does not like to make friends with the rich Paṇi who does not offer Soma sacrifice (4,28,7). A poet prays (3,58,2), 'Destroy in us the mentality of the Paṇi' (*jarethāṁ asmat viPaṇeḥ manīshām*). Sometime the Rishi (poet) betrays a conciliatory mood. In one hymn (6,53) the god Pūshan is repeatedly requested 'to soften the heart of the Paṇi' and make the Paṇis obedient. This hymn occurs in a book (6) of the Rigveda composed by Rishis of the family of Bharadvaja. In one hymn of this book (6,45,31-33) the poet, a Bhāradvāja, praises Bṛibu, a Paṇi chief, for giving thousands and a thousand liberal gifts. Indian tradition long remembered this acceptance of gifts by Bharadvāja from the Paṇi Bṛibu as an exceptional case, an example of the special rule that a Brahman who has fallen into distress may accept gifts from despicable men without being tainted by sin. We are told in the code of Manu (10, 107), 'Bharadvāja, a performer of great austerities, accepted many cows from the carpenter Bṛibu, when he was starving together with his sons in a lonely forest.' (Bühler). Sāyana in his commentary on R. V. 6,45,31 describes Bṛibu as the carpenter of the Paṇis.

It is evident from the hymns of the Rigveda that the Aryas were divided into two main classes, the priests and the warriors. Cattle breeding appears to be the main source of their livelihood, cows being the chief wealth. Agriculture was practised to a limited extent. A hymn (9,112) refers to the different professions followed and the crafts practised by the Aryas. Trade finds no place in the list. So the conclusion that the much maligned Paṇis were the representatives of an earlier commercial civilisation seems irresistible. Among the antiquities unearthed at Mohen-jo-Daro are coins with pictographic legends that indicate the very early development of commercial life in the Indus Valley. The Paṇis probably represented this pre-historic civilisation of the Indus Valley in its last phase when it came into contact with the invading *Arya civilisation*. During the second *millennium B.C.* there occurred in the Indus Valley events analogous to those that occurred in the Aegean world at about the same time, that is to say, successive waves of invaders of Aryan speech poured from the north-west. These invaders who in the *Rigveda* call themselves Arya met in the southern part of the valley a civilised people who lived in cities and castles and mainly depended on commerce for their livelihood. The Arya conquerors who were inferior in material culture either destroyed the cities or allowed them to fall into ruin. Their great god Indra is called Purohā or Purandara, 'sacker of cities.' Like the pre-historic civilisation of the Aegean, the pre-historic civilisation of the Indus Valley also failed to survive the shock of the Aryan invasion.

2. LATER VEDIC PERIOD.

The later Vedic period is represented by the later Vedic literature—the original portions of the Yajurveda, the Brāhmaṇas with the Āraṇyakas, the Śrauta and the Gṛihya Sūtras and such subsidiary works as Yāska's Nirukta, Śaunaka's Vṛihaddevatā and Pāṇini's grammar. A physical change of great magnitude, the disappearance of the mighty Sarasvatī, the foremost of rivers (*nadītamā*), in the sands of the desert happened at the initial stage of this period. The fact is first noticed in the Pañchaviṁśa (Tāṇḍya) Brāhmaṇa (25, 10, 1) where it is said that a performer of the Sārasvata Satras should be initiated at the Vinasana or the place where the Sarasvatī disappears in the desert. The disappearance of the great river must have forced many of the tribes that dwelt on her and her tributaries to migrate eastward. This led to the rise of a great nation, the Kuru-Pañchālas, on the Jumna and the Ganges. In the Brāhmaṇa texts the inhabitants of the upper Indus Valley are called 'Udīchyas,' northerners, as distinguished from the Kuru-Pañchālas who are Prāchyas, 'easterners.'[1] The 'northerners' retained their pre-eminence in Vedic culture even after the rise of the Kuru-Pañchālas. It is said in the Kaushitakī Brāhmaṇa 7, 6, 'Therefore in the northern quarter is speech uttered with more discernment, and northwards men go to learn speech; he who comes thence, to him men hearken, so he used to say, for this was the quarter discerned by speech.' (Keith's translation). A story in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa (11, 4, 1) tells us that a Kuru-Pañchāla Brahman of the standing of the famous Uddālaka Āruṇī sought instruction in ritual in the northern country. Aśvapati of the Kekayas, a people of the north-west, is cited as an authority in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 10, 6, 1 (Chhāndogya Upanishad 5, 11, 4). But this pre-eminence of the northerners was not of long duration. There is clear evidence to show that most of the Brāhmaṇa texts were compiled in the home of the Kuru-Pañchālas. When this people was engaged in developing the Vedic culture along the orthodox line, the west and the north-west began to diverge more and more from the old path. The normal form of government contemplated by the Vedic texts is monarchy limited by the power of the priesthood. According to the Taittirīya Saṁhitā of the Yajurveda (1, 8, 10) the following formulas have to be recited by the officiating priest at the consecration of the king:—

'O ye gods that instigate the gods, do ye instigate him, descendant of N. N., to freedom from foes, to great lordship, to great overlordship, to great rule over the people.

[1] This distinction between the northern and the eastern countries is recognised by Pāṇini (1.1,75 etc.) and the lexicographer Amara. According to the latter (2, 6-7) the country to the north-west of the river Śarāvatī is the northern country (Udīchya) and the country to the south-east of the same river is the eastern country (Prāchya). The author of the Kāśikā on Pāṇini 1.1,75 quotes a stanza wherein the same river Śarāvatī is named as the boundary line of the regions where two different dialects of the Sanskrit language flourished. The Śarāvatī should not be confused with the Sarasvatī for both the rivers are named side by side in the lexicon of Amara, but may be identified either with the Ghagghar or the Chitang.

'This is your king, O Bharatas; Soma is the King of us Brahmans' (Keith's translation).

Āpastamba in his Śrauta Sūtra (18,12,7) suggests three alternatives to the Bharatas, *viz.*, the Kurus, the Pañchālas and the Kuru-Pañchālas, the last being reminiscent of the time when the Kurus and the Pañchālas happened to be united under one king. The following passage in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (8,14) shows that a different form of government obtained in the Indus Valley at the time of the composition of this passage :—

'Therefore in the eastern quarter, whatever kings there are of the eastern peoples, they are anointed for overlordship (*sāmrājyāya*); 'O Overlord' (*samrāt*) they style them when anointed in accordance with the action of the gods. * * * Therefore in this southern quarter whatever kings there are of the Satvants, they are anointed for paramount rule (*bhojyāya*); 'O paramount ruler' (*bhoja*), they style them * * *. Therefore in the western quarter, whatever kings there are of the *Nīchyas* (low-born) and the *Apāchyas*[1] (illmannered ones), they are anointed for selfrule (*svarājya*); 'O self-ruler' (*svarāt*), they style them * * * Therefore in the northern quarter, the lands of the Uttara Kurus and the Uttara Madras, beyond the Himavant, they (kings) are anointed for sovereignty (Vairājyāya), 'O Sovereign' (*virāt*) they style them * * * Therefore in this firm middle established quarter, whatever kings there are of the Kuru-Pañchālas with the Vaśas and Uśīnaras, they are anointed for kingship (*rājyāya*); 'King' (rājā) they style them when anointed.'

Kingless tribes like the Mālavas (Malloi), Kshudrakas (Oxydrakai) and Kathaioi were also met with by Alexander the Great in the Punjab. According to the Mahābhārata (Book 8, section 45) the land of the five rivers was also known as the country of the Āraṭṭas and the Vāhīkas. It is evident from Pāṇini (4,2,117-118) that some of the Vāhīka villages were situated in the land of the Uśīnaras. It may therefore be concluded that the Uśīnaras who were neighbours of the Kuru-Pañchālas lived in the Eastern Punjab. The presence in the Indus Valley of self-ruling tribes who are considered low-born (*nīchyas*) and ill-mannered (*apāchyas*) by the orthodox could only be due to the influx of fresh hordes of alien immigrants. These invaders are thus named by Baudhāyana in his Śrauta Sūtra (18, 13) :—

'He who visits the countries of the Āraṭṭas or Gandhāras or Sauvīras or Kāraskaras or Kaliṅgas if he considers himself a sinner should perform the Chatushṭoma.'

The point is made clearer by the following passage of the Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra (1, 1, 32-33) :—

'The inhabitants of Ānartta, of Aṅga, of Magadha, of Saurāshṭra, of the Deccan, of Upavṛit, of Sind, and the Sauvīras are of mixed origin.

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[1] Prof. A. B. Keith whose translation of the passage is quoted above renders Nīchyas and Apāchyas as southern and western peoples. (Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 25, *Rigveda Brahmanas*, p. 330). I follow Sāyana's reading and adopt his explanation.

He who has visited the (countries of the) Āraṭṭas, Kāraskaras, Puṇḍras, Sauvīras, Vaṅgas, Kaliṅgas, (or) Praṇunas shall offer a Punastoma or Sarvaprishṭhi.' (Bühler's translation).

We have already seen that the Āraṭṭas, also known as the Vāhīkas, lived in the land of the five rivers. The land of the Gandhāras is now represented by Peshawar and the neighbouring districts of the North-West Frontier. The Sindhus are evidently the inhabitants of Sind. As the Sauvīras are always mentioned with the Sindhus in the Sanskrit and Pali literature these two peoples must have been neighbours. The statement of the Baudhayāna Dharmasūtra that these people were of mixed origin and that sojourn among them was considered sinful explains why they are called Nīchyas and Apāchyas by the author of the last book of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. Tribes settled in Eastern India like the Kaliṅgas, Magadhas, Aṅgas, Vaṅgas were originally probably of the same stock as the Gandhāras, Āraṭṭas, Karaskaras, Sindhus and Sauvīras with whom they are always grouped in the Sanskrit texts. The culture of the Āraṭṭas and the Sindhus of the Indus Valley is thus described in the Mahābhārata (Book 8, 44, 40-46) :—

'The land through which the five rivers after issuing from the mountains pass is called Āraṭṭa; virtuous men should not spend there more than two days. There are two Piśāchas called Vāha and Hīka in the Vipāśā (*Beas*). The Vāhīkas are their offspring. They have not been created by Prajāpati; being low-born, how can they know the rules of piety prescribed in the sacred books? One should avoid the Karaskaras, Mahisakas, Kaliṅgas, Keralas, Karkoṭas and Virakas who follow the path of vice......... The Vāhīkas dwell in the Āraṭṭa country; and the low Brahmans of that country, who have been living there from the time of Prajāpati, do not either study Veda or perform sacrifice. The gods do not eat food offered by these wicked Vrātyas. The Prasthalas, Madras, Gandhāras, Āraṭṭas, Khasas, Vasātis, Sindhus and Sauvīras are mostly wicked.'

This and similar other passages in the Mahābhārata, Book 8, are in agreement with the indirect testimony of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and the Sūtras of Baudhāyana relating to the manners and customs of the inhabitants of the Punjab and Sind. As the Aryas destroyed the great fabric of the prehistoric civilisation of the Paṇis of the Indus Valley, later immigrants all but overthrew the Arya culture in turn in the same region and the modern Hinduism of the Punjab and Sind still bears a deep heterodox stamp as compared to the Hinduism of the modern representatives of the ancient Kuru-Pañchālas in the Delhi and the Agra provinces.

3. DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD.

The contact of different types of culture in the Indus Valley resulting from the successive waves of immigration could not but influence even the triumphant Arya or Vedic culture. This is perhaps best examplified by the funeral customs

of the Vedic people. The way or ways in which the Vedic Aryas disposed of their dead is first referred to in the funeral hymns of the Rigveda (10, 15-18) most of the stanzas of which also recur in the Atharvaveda, Book 18, and the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka, Chapter 6. In one stanza of the Rigveda (10, 15, 14) fathers who are *agnidagdhāḥ*, 'cremated', and who are *anagnidagdhāḥ*, 'not cremated' are referred to. This stanza also occurs in the Atharvaveda (18, 2, 34) and, with slight variation, in the Vājasaneya Saṁhitā or the White Yajurveda (19, 60). 'Not cremated' or 'not burnt with fire' does not necessarily mean 'buried,' as Prof. Macdonell supposes,[1] but may as well refer to those who could not be cremated by accident. Rigveda 10, 18, 10-13 is supposed by some to refer to the burial of the uncremated body. But according to the Āśvalāyana-gṛihya-sūtra (4, 5, 7-10),[2] these stanzas refer, not to the burial of the uncremated body, but to the burial in a cinerary urn of the bone relics of a body that has already been cremated. After giving an account of the manner in which the dead body of one who has set up the (sacred Śrauta) fires is cremated (4, 1-4), Āśvalāyana thus describes the ceremony of burying the bones (4, 5) :—

"1. The gathering (of the bones is performed) after the tenth (Tithi from the death), (on a Tithi) with an odd number, of the dark fortnight, under a single Nakshatra.

"2. A man into a male urn without special marks, a woman into a female one without special marks.

* * * * * *

"5. With the thumb and the fourth finger they should put each single bone (into the urn) without making noise.

"6. The feet first, the head last.

"7. Having well gathered them and purified them with a winnowing basket, they should put (the urn) into a pit........with the verse, 'Go to thy mother earth' (Rigveda 10, 18, 10).

"8. With the following (verse) he should throw earth (into the pit).

* * * * * *

"10. Having covered (the urn) with a lid with (the verse), 'I fasten to thee' (Rigveda 10, 18, 13), they then should go away without looking back, should bathe in water, and perform a Śrāddha for the deceased."

According to the scholiast Gārgya Nārāyaṇa *kumbha* (male urn) is without female breasts (*stanarahita*) and *kumbhī* (female urn) is with female breasts (*stanavatī*). Rajendra Lal Mitra understands by female urn an urn with spout and by a male urn an urn without spout.[3]

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[1] A. A. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology* (Encyclopædia of Indo-Aryan Research, III, 1, A) Strassburg, p. 165.

[2] *The Gṛihya-Sūtras*, translated by Hermann Oldenberg, Part I (Sacred Books of the East, XXIX), p. 246.

[3] *The Aitareya Aranyaka*, edited by Rajendra Lal Mitra (Bib. Ind.), Introduction, p. 47.

Rigveda 10, 18, 10-13 are repeated in the Atharvaveda 18, 3, 49-52 with slight variants. The Atharvan version of the stanzas are thus translated by Whitney[1] :—

"Approach (*upa-sṛp*) thou this mother earth (*bhūmi*), the wide-expanded earth (*pṛithivī*), the very propitious; the earth (*pṛithivī*) (is) soft as wool to him who has sacrificial gifts; let her protect thee on the forward road in front.

"Swell thou up, O earth; do not press down; be to him easy of access, easy of approach; as a mother her son with her skirt (*sic*), do thou, O earth (*bhūmi*), cover him.

"*Let the earth kindly remain swelling up,* for let a thousand props support (*upa-çri*) it; let these houses, dripping with ghee, pleasant, be forever a refuge for him there (*atra*)."

"I brace up (*ut-stabh*) the earth from about thee; setting down this clod (? *loga*) let me take no harm; this pillar do the Fathers maintain for thee; let Yama there make seats for thee."

In the Kauśikasūtra, 86 (8 and 10), a manual connected with the Atharvaveda,[2] the first and the last stanzas are quoted in connection with the ceremony of the interment of bones after cremation. Kauśika's account of this rite differs in certain details from that of Āśvalāyana. The former prescribes the ceremony of gathering the bone relics on the third day after cremation (82, 25-26). The fragments are then deposited in a jar (*kalaśa*) which is buried under a tree (*82, 31-32*). *Later on the bones are taken out of the jar* and deposited in a pit where they are rearranged in the form of a human skeleton (85, 19-25) in accordance with the following stanza (18, 4, 52) of the Atharvaveda :—

"Collect thy body according to its joints; I arrange thy members with *brahman*"

When the bone relics are thus deposited they are viewed by the relatives of the deceased while the following stanza (Atharvaveda, 18, 4, 37) is recited :—

"This *funeral pile* (? *kasāmbu*) (is) piled with piling; come, ye (his) fellows, look down at it; this mortal goeth to immortality; make ye houses for him according to his kindred."

Then (Kauśika-sūtra 86, 2) 'filling a dish with clarified butter (*sarpi*) and honey it is placed at the head of the rearranged skeleton with the following stanza (A. V. 18, 3, 72) :—

"*What fathers of thine went away earlier and what later, for them let* there go a brook of ghee, hundred-streamed (*śatadhārā*), overflowing."

With A. V. 18, 4, 16-24 are placed in the eight quarters (*i.e.* four quarters and four intermediate quarters) dishes containing milk, curds, ghee, flesh, food,

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[1] Whitney and Lanman, *Atharvaveda* (Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 8), p. 861.

[2] *The Kauśika-sūtra of the Athrvaveda.* Edited by Maurice Bloomfield, New Haven, 1890 (Vol. XIV of the Journal of the American Oriental Society).

honey, sap and water. The bones are then sprinkled with water (Kauśikasūtra 86, 5) with the following stanza of the Atharvaveda (18, 4, 36):—

sahasradhāraṁ śatadhāramutsamakshitaṁ
vyachyamānaṁ salilasya pṛishṭhe I
ūrjaṁ duhānamanapasphurantam upāsate
pitaraḥ svadhābhiḥ II

"A thousand-streamed, hundred-streamed fountain unexhausted, expanded upon the back of the sea, yielding refreshment, unresisting do the Fathers wait on their will."

Whitney's translation reproduced here is literal. Sāyana's commentary on the verse is remarkable. Sāyana takes *utsam* in the sense of 'a jar resembling a fountain' (*utsopamaṁ kalaśam*) and *sahasradhāram*,' '(a jar) with water pouring through thousand holes' and so *śatadhāram*, '(a jar) with water pouring through hundred holes.' According to Sāyana's interpretation the stanza may be translated thus:—

"Jar full of water pouring through thousand holes through hundred holes, held up in the sky, yielding nourishing water, though with numerous holes yet entire (*avidīryamānam*), beautiful (*samyak śobhamānam*), do Fathers wait on for drink" (*svadhābhiḥ svaprīṇana-sādhanairannairhetubhiḥ*).

The dishes containing offerings placed around the bones are covered with *palāsa* leaf with the stanza (A. V. 18, 4, 53) beginning, "King leaf is the cover of the dishes." With the next following stanza (A. V. 18, 4, 54) they are covered with stones, that is to say, the pit is filled with stones. Then a pile is erected over the grave, consisting of bricks and stones according to the commentator of the Kauśikasūtra (86, 10) with A. V. 18, 3, 49 (R. V. 18, 10) and with A. V. 18, 2, 50 (18, 4, 66) which ends "As a mother her son with her hem, do thou cover him, O earth."

The followers of the Yajurveda are divided into two main schools, the Black Yajurveda school and the White Yajurveda school. The collection of *mantras* or sacred formulas of the White Yajurveda is called the Vājasaneya Saṁhitā after its reputed compiler, Yājñavalkya Vājasaneya. The mantras for the performance of the funeral ceremonies (Pitṛimedha) contained in Chapter 35 of the Vājasaneya Saṁhitā are mostly original. The ritual of the Pitṛimedha of the White Yajurveda school is described in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 13, 8. 1-4 and the Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra, 23, 32-97. In these texts the preliminary rites—the cremation of the dead body, the collection of the bone relics after cremation, and depositing them in a jar temporarily, are not described. The cremation ceremony is only briefly described in the Pāraskara Gṛihya-sūtra (3, 10) which belongs to the Vājasaneya school. So it is to be presumed that the followers of the White Yajurveda performed the ceremony of collecting bone relics after cremation and of depositing them in a jar temporarily in accordance with the ritual texts of the other Vedas and preferably of the Black Yajurveda.

According to the ritual books of the White Yajurveda the bone-relics are buried long time after the death of the person, "and when people do not even remember the years (that have passed)." "If they do remember, let him make it in uneven years, under a single Nakshatra, at new-moon, either in autumn or summer"[1] (or in the month of Māgha according to Kātyāyana). "For an Agnichit (the builder of the fire-altar) the tomb should be after the manner of the fire-altar. After the selection of the place of burial the sacrificer bids them cut out (the earth). He should cut out to whatever extent he intends to raise (the sepulchral mound), but let him rather cut it out so as to be just of men's size." By earth-cutting is probably meant levelling only and not digging a pit. The site is further enclosed with enclosing stones. The ceremony begins with sweeping the site with *palāsa* branch accompanied by the recitation of the following stanza (Vājasaneya Saṁhitā 35, 1): 'Let the Paṇis go away from hence, the perverse scorners of the gods. It is the place of this Soma-offerer.' The site is then ploughed with a team of six oxen and seeds of all kinds of herbs are sown. After ploughing and sowing the performer of the rite pours the jar-ful of bones with this stanza (Vājasaneya Saṁhita 35, 5): 'Savitri thus deposits his bones in the lap of the mother, this earth; O Earth, be thou propitious unto him.' The jar is then thrown away and the charred bones are rearranged in the form of the body of the dead man limb by limb. Thirteen bricks, each measuring a foot square, are placed on the bones and a mound of earth is erected on them. "For a Kshatriya he may make it as high as a man with upstretched arms. for a Brahman reaching up to the mouth, for a woman up to the hips, for a Vaiśya up to the thighs, for a Sudra up to the knee."[2] Barley grain is then sown on the burial mound and it is covered with Avaka-plants and Darbha grass.

Two very interesting points are noted by the author of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa in connection with the building of the burial mound. The orthodox view, as described above, is that the mound should be built of earth thrown on the surface of the site after covering the bones only with thirteen bricks. A different custom prevailed among the Easterners and others who first covered the entire site with a layer of bricks or stone slabs (?) and then piled earth on this structure. We are told in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (13, 8, 2, 1):—

'Now, some bank up (the sepulchral mound) after covering up (the site). The gods and the Asuras, both of them sprung from Prajāpati, were contending for (the possession of) this (*terrestrial*) world. The gods drove out the Asuras; their rivals and enemies, from this world; whence those who are godly people make their sepulchres so as not to be separate (from the earth), whilst those (people) who are of the Asura nature, the Easterners and others, (make their sepulchral mounds) so as to be separated (from the earth), either on a basin or on some such thing."[3]

[1] Eggeling, *The Satapatha-Brahmana*, Part V (Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XLIV), pp. 428-29.
[2] *Ibid*, p. 435.
[3] *Ibid*, pp. 429-30.

About the shape of the burial mound the author of the Brāhmaṇa says (13, 8, 1, 5) :—

'Four-cornered (is the sepulchral mound). Now the gods and the Asuras, both of them sprung from Prajāpati, were contending in the (four) regions (quarters). The gods drove out the Asuras, their rivals and enemies, from the regions, and, being regionless, they were overcome. Wherefore the people who are godly make their burial-places four-cornered, whilst those who are of the Asura nature, the Easterners and others, (make them) round, for they (the gods) drove them out from the regions. He arranges it so as to lie between the two regions, the eastern and the southern, for in that region assuredly is the door to the world of the Fathers: through the above he thus causes him to enter the world of the Fathers; and by means of the (four) corners he (the deceased) establishes himself in the regions, and by means of the other body (of the tomb) in the intermediate regions: he thus establishes him in all the regions.'[1]

The Prāchyas (easterners) referred to in these extracts are the Kuru-Pāñchālas (p. 6) and their neighbours in the east and this section of the Brāhmaṇa evidently originated among the Udīchyas in the Upper Indus Valley.

The Ṛik stanzas for the performance of the funeral ceremonies of the followers of the Black Yajurveda are collected in the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka, Chapter 6, and the ritual is described in the Pitṛimedhasūtras of Baudhāyana, Hiraṇyakeśin and others.[2] These texts prescribe different modes of disposal of the bone relics of different classes of men. Thus Hiraṇyakeśin writes (13) :—

athaikeshāṁ kumbhāntaṁ nidhānamanāhitāgneḥ śtriyāścha nivapanāntaṁ haviryajñayājinaḥ punardahanāntaṁ somayājinaḥ chayanāntamagnichita iti.

"Then among individuals burial in the urn is provided for one who has not established sacred fires and for woman; depositing on the earth for one who has performed the Haviryajña (offering of rice cakes and butter); re-cremation for one who has performed the Soma sacrifice; collection (of bone relics) only for an Agnichit (the builder of the fire altar)."

Here an attempt is evidently made to explain and reconcile the different usages obtaining among the different Vedic sects, for in the ritual texts of the other Vedic schools no distinction is made as regards the disposal of the bone relics of the deceased on account of the performance on the one hand, and non-performance on the other, of different classes of Vedic ceremonies. As we have already seen, Āśvalāyana prescribes the burial of the charred bones in a cinerary urn for all who have established sacred fires and irrespective of the class of sacrifices that they have performed through those fires. In the Kauśikasūtra of the Atharvaveda and in the ritual books of the White Yajurveda the urn is dispensed with and the bone relics are placed directly on the earth at the bottom of the grave. In the Pitṛimedhasūtra of

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[1] *Ibid*, pp. 423-424.

[2] *Pitrimedhasūtras of Baudhāyana, Hiranyakesin, Gautama*, edited by Dr. W. Caland, Leipzig, 1896, (Abhandlungen fur die Kunde des Morgenlandes, Band X, No. 3).

Gautama connected with the Sāmaveda the burial of the jar containing the bone relics at the root of a tree is prescribed (1, 5, 34) as the final act in the actual disposal of the dead body. Gautama says (1, 5, 31), "As long as there remain traces of the bone relics (in the jar) the deceased enjoys heaven."[1]

A comparison of the different modes of disposal of charred bones of the dead among the Vedic Aryas—urn-burial, earth-burial and re-cremation (*punar-dahana*) with the funeral customs of the copper age folk of the lower Indus Valley appears to be very instructive. Sir John Marshall writes in a note published in The Illustrated London News, March 6. 1926 (p. 398):—

"The usual method of disposing of the dead seems to have been by cremation, and Fig. 7 illustrates one of the large cremation-urns found in one of the houses—wide-bodied jar in which a few fragments of bone were placed along with a number of medium-sized and miniature pottery vessels. Many examples of these cinerary urns have been found both at Mohen-jo-Daro and at Harappa, and at the latter site burial structures of brick like the modern Hindu Samādhi have also been found (Fig. 6). On the other hand, bones have been discovered in what appear to have been graves formed in the solid brick-work of the walls or beneath the threshold of doors."

At Nal, in the Jhalwar District in Baluchistan, certain mounds excavated by Mr. Hargreaves in 1924-25 have yielded remains of the copper age closely related to what have been found at Harappa and Mohen-jo-Daro in the Indus Valley. Sir John Marshall writes in the same note:—

"But at Nal, in Baluchistan, Mr. Hargreaves discovered a burial-ground of this same Chalcolithic age in which two different forms of burial are exhibited. In one the corpse was laid entire in a shallow grave of unburnt brick (Figs. 3 and 4); in the other the skull and a few of the bigger bones only were laid directly in the ground, along with numerous earthenware vases, copper implements, beads, grindstones, and other small objects (Fig. 5), the body having presumably been exposed to the vultures and such of the bones as were left subsequently collected and buried. The painted earthenware vessels found in the latter class of graves (Figs. 8 to 14 on page 400) constitute a remarkably fine series, most of them being superior in fabric and design to the potteries found on the city sites, to which, however, they are closely akin."

The different modes of disposal of the charred bone relics of the dead that obtained among the Vedic Aryas probably originally pertained to different strands of culture and one is tempted to attribute the urn-burial to the influence of the burial customs of the copper age people of the lower Indus Valley. Though no trace of earth-burial of charred bones has yet come to light at Harappa and Mohen-jo-Daro, at the latter place and at Nal have been unearthed fragments of copper and earthen vessels with holes that remind one of "jar full of water pouring through thousand holes, through hundred holes" required for sprinkling water on the bone relics according to the Atharvaveda (p. 11.)

[1] *Yāvadasthi kiñchiddhriyate tāvat svarge loke mahīyate.*

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